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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationships between teachers' education and their instructional style, focusing on one Latina elementary teacher working with English language learners. It examined what beliefs guided her choice of literacy instruction, how school structure impacted instruction, and the roles of culture and gender in literacy instruction. The teacher had a Spanish English bilingual classroom within a predominantly Latino working class neighborhood. English was the primary language of instruction, with support provided in Spanish. Data came from observation interviews, and document analysis. Results indicated that the teacher implemented childhood reading techniques in her classrooms while having the choice and the freedom to sift through her experiences and create her own instructional agenda. The dominant culture caused her to perform gender and culture in different ways at home and in school. While she spoke Spanish and shared many cultural experiences with her students, there were differences between her home and school culture. However, at times she resisted the dominant culture mandates in order to provide students access to an education (though she insisted that access to education provided by the school was necessary for her students to succeed). (Contains 35 references.) (SM)

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Running Head: Exploring the Past and Connecting the Present

Exploring the Past and Connecting the Present: One Latina Teacher's Story

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Policy issues in the U.S. teacher education request "that all teachers need to acquire skills needed to work with culturally diverse student populations" (Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996, p. 525). Statistics show that candidates for teacher education are White, Anglo-Saxon, lower-or-middle-class females who are monolingual in English (Avery & Walker, 1993; Beynon & Toohey, 1995; Gomez, 1994). During the 1990s, California has had a dramatic increase in need for teachers due to enrollment, retirement and high attrition rates for beginning teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1999, p. 17). Nearly 80% of teaching force in this state is white, slightly less than the comparable national figure, while only 40% of the state's students are white. Of those studying to be teachers, minority group members constitute only 12 percent of the population (August & Hakuta, 1997). One of the research needs August and Hakuta suggest is "to learn how to increase the number of teachers skilled in working with English-language learners" (p. 269).

The emphasis on diversifying teachers in education implies that minority teachers will be more effective in working with students of similar background. Gay (1993b) states "it cannot be assumed that teachers of color are culturally affiliated with their students" (as cited in Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996, p. 525) or are able to translate their knowledge "into culturally relevant pedagogy and success for pupils" (Montecinos, 1994 as cited in Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996, p. 525). All teachers arrive at school with their own "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1994) that can positively impact student instruction. Yet, many of these teachers do not

know how to translate this knowledge into their classroom curriculum. Furthermore, they may have systematically ignored their cultural experiences in order to succeed in school. Experiences of teachers need to be explicit while placing classroom practice in the larger context of schools and education of children. One way is to provide strategic professional development by focusing on translating teachers' "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1994) into classroom pedagogy. Although professional development is an arena that can strengthen the use of relevant cultural knowledge in the classroom, teachers do not always access this rich source of information. Attending to "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1994) between teachers and students is important for teachers of all cultures.

I inquire into the relationships between teachers' education and their instructional style. What beliefs guide their choice of instruction? How does school structure impact instruction? What roles do culture and gender play in literacy instruction? A critical description of the daily world of teachers from the vantage point of its participants is rarely addressed. I posit that reflecting on childhood experiences along with observing current instruction will lead to a critical examination of teachers' decision making processes that can lead to school success.

Theoretical Framework

I assume that culture impacts gender and is multifaceted depending on personal and professional environments. I analyze the data with an awareness of "multiracial feminism." This is an attempt to "go beyond recognition of diversity and difference among women to examine structures of domination, specifically the importance of race in understanding the social construction of gender" (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1997, p. 23). These teachers share the complexities of their upbringing and their workplace and how they resist these structures, and they question their roles as women, Latina, and teachers in different ways. Employing this framework allows women's differences to be socially and historically situated.

Although it is important to situate the experiences of women, it is critical to acknowledge the individual and how her experiences contribute to the understanding of gender. Gender relations refer to structures that organize sexuality and gender, sexual division of labour, power relations between men and women, and between different groups within each sex, family, childbearing and political struggles (Connell, 1985, p. 9). The gender regime is used to describe the structural inventory of a school (Connell, 1987, p. 99).

Within the structure of schools, how do women perform gender? Is there resistance and/or reproduction of hegemony? Teachers reproduce and resist hegemonic messages in curriculum. These are important observations to make because their performativity as women results in gaining or losing access to

interactions and power situations in schools. Finally, observing cultural symbols in classrooms such as books, posters, thematic units, projects, and language may reveal prevailing power structures.

Key Literature

Two areas of research inform this study. First, I begin with a look at research on teacher beliefs paying special attention to the seminal works of Nespor (1987), and Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, and Lloyd (1991). Second, I focus on funds of knowledge research concentrating on the work of Moll (1994).

Teacher Beliefs

In recent years, researchers have increasingly turned their attention to how beginning teachers learned to teach. Teacher beliefs influence a teacher's decision making process (Richardson, 1996, p. 102), and exploring teachers' childhood experiences can provide insight into this decision making process.

Important work in this area is attributed to Nespor (1987), who found that beliefs are formed early and tend to self-perpetuate while change during adulthood was rare. Therefore, we must pay attention to goals teachers pursue and their interpretations of classroom processes. Richardson, Anders, Tidwell and Lloyd (1991) interviewed thirty-eight teachers and found that beliefs of teachers related to their classroom practices in the teaching of reading

comprehension. Richardson (1996) states that students bring beliefs to teacher education programs that influence how and what they learn. Beliefs have origins in personal experiences, experiences with schooling, and formal knowledge that includes school subjects, readings, and television impact beliefs. Similar to the work of Munby (1982, 1984), Richardson asserts that qualitative methodologies such as observation and interviews deepens the understanding of teachers' thinking and world views. Holt-Reynolds (1992) found that students used their own experiences to develop beliefs about teaching. Zancanella (1991) concluded that many aspects of the teachers' personal approaches were translated into ways of teaching. However, the mixing of these personal approaches with the conventional school approach was a troubling process. Pressures to prepare students for state tests created a tug-of-war between personal thinking about literature and ways of thinking represented by the tests.

In contrast, Rust (1994) found that beginning teachers develop a set of beliefs about teaching and learning in their teacher education programs that are not related to experiences in elementary and secondary education.

Funds of Knowledge

In the 90's there was increasing research focusing on connections between classrooms and communities. Moll (1994) asserted that "application of cultural resources in instruction is another way of organizing change in

children's academic performance, and of demonstrating how their language, cultural, and intellectual resources form the bases of their schooling" (p.179). Two key studies illuminate the disjuncture between schools and homes. Carger (1996) found that Latino children have encounters with print at home, yet rich experiences with oral information, observations, and collaboration. This is similar to the findings of Walker and MacGillivray (1999) study onliteracy experiences with Latina teachers. Valdes (1996) focuses on the lives of ten newly immigrated Mexican families and argues that these schools have little understanding about multiple perceptions of the world.

Considerable research has recently focused on teachers tapping into the backgrounds of their students (Moll, 1988; Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez, 1992; Moll and Greenberg, 1990). This literature investigates the opportunities provided when students' funds of knowledge are acknowledged in classrooms (Moll, 1988). One area reveals how developing units of study that connect literacy to the social world provides students with practice in oral and written language (Moll and Greenberg, 1990). Another area focuses on bridging the students' world, the teachers' world and family's funds of knowledge by capitalizing on community resources (Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez, 1992).

Particularly relevant here is Moll's (1994) description of his ten-year research focusing on the use of information from the household analysis to develop innovations in teaching literacy. Moll concluded with two advantages in studying literacy in school and community settings. First, studying humans

within their environment allowed for a more valid understanding of them. Second, a positive view of minority children, their capabilities, and how pedagogy constrains and distorts was provided. Further work by Gonzalez, Moll, Tenery, Rivera, Rendon, Gonzalez and Amanti (1995) found a shift in the definition of culture of the households and that the idea that households lacked worthwhile knowledge and experiences was invalidated.

Issues that need further exploration in teacher education can be considered in three ways. First, strategies are prevalent in thinking processes of successful Latina/o students and instructional practices of these teachers. Therefore, more emphasis needs to be placed on strategic training in teacher education. Second, many Latina/o students come to college lacking strategies to access complex content in their courses (Walker and MacGillivray, 1999). Exploring their own literacy experiences may help preservice teachers identify their teaching style and positive or negative learning experiences that could impact their teaching. Exploring preconceived beliefs about instruction, reading, culture, class, and gender in autobiographical narratives can occur in teacher education classes. Third, research needs to address monolingual teachers promoting comprehension with Latina/o students and the dynamics involved with instruction. These findings need to be shared with preservice students.

Method

Participants and Setting

Because I want to learn more about Latina teachers working with English language learners, I build on work conducted in a previous CIERA (Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement) study. The CIERA study consists of three phases that began in the fall of 1998 and focused on Latina teacher early literacy experiences. I first met these teachers in the fall of 1998 while working on the USC CIERA project. Thirteen Latina teachers were asked to participate in a study focusing on literacy experiences. I asked five of the thirteen teachers who participated in the CIERA study to continue. This selection is based on teacher interviews I conducted as a research assistant in a separate research project (Walker, MacGillivray, & Aguilar, 2000). There were three criteria that I established for choosing participants from the larger CIERA study: (a) teachers with whom I had already formed a bond; (b) teachers who were willing to share their experiences and offer rich information about themselves as teachers and Latinas; and (c) teachers who have different strengths, different pathways into education, and teaching styles. Each of these teachers have Spanish English bilingual classrooms within a predominately Latino working class neighborhood. English is the primary language for instruction, with support provided in Spanish. I selected teachers in elementary classrooms in order to focus on literacy development with the students they teach. This case study focuses on Rosa who is 27 years old, born in Los

Angeles, and lives at home with her mother and three sisters. Rosa teachers at Madison Elementary School (pseudonym) which is located near the University of Southern California. There are 1,918 students, 103 teachers, 58 support staff, two assistant principals and one principal. This is the second year for both the principal and assistant principals at this school. The school was built in 1907.

Research Design

This study is qualitative in nature because it looks at a social phenomenon as it occurs in its natural setting (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). This research is descriptive in that "it assumes the value of context and setting and searches for deeper understanding of the past lived experience" (p. 39). Literacy, culture, and gender are socially constructed and need to be contextualized. Underlying this plan is the assumption that gender and culture cannot be isolated in activities, but rather are woven through learning and instruction.

This study employs three qualitative procedures: (a) participant observation; (b) document analysis; and (c) interviews. As a participant observer, I watched as Rosa provided literacy instruction.**hours?** Document analysis included student work, print on classroom walls, core novels, picture books, and textbooks that are products of the context in which they are produced and therefore "grounded in the real world" (Merriam, 1998, p. 126). Six hours was spent interviewing Rosa for this study. I was particularly interested in how

Rosa co-constructed her knowledge of literacy and literacy instruction. Rosa participated in three semi-structured interviews and many informal conversations.

The initial interview focused on conversations from data collected in the larger CIERA study about Rosa's childhood literacy experiences and current classroom instruction and included beliefs about teaching literacy, roles of literacy and their lesson design were explored during these interviews. I also explored her beliefs about gender and culture and their roles in literacy instruction through analysis of stories used and student products. The second interview concentrated on issues of literacy beliefs, gender, culture and the impact of the school structure. During the exit interview I shared preliminary findings with Rosa. By the middle of August, recurrent patterns, concepts, and themes emerged. I hired a transcriber to type notes from tapes which I read and coded for recall, reflection, and re-interpretation.

The approaches to analysis described in the following sections were grounded in a rigorous approach to the analysis of qualitative data; they were also informed by a feminist vision of methodology that placed me in the same picture with the teachers as we co-constructed the data together.

All data sources were subjected to the same coding using Strauss and Corbin's (1990) constant comparison analysis to describe and analyze a pattern of relationships. Analysis included both inductive and deductive components.

The inductive component of the analysis consisted of three coding procedures: open, axial, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Initial codes include: childhood learning, current instruction, home culture, classroom culture, gender in literature, gender in classroom environment, state, district, school, and personal. Axial coding allowed me to identify patterns of reproduction between childhood and classroom teaching, classrooms representing dual culture or dominant culture, dominant culture neutralizing gender, teachers making gender explicit, and hierarchy of school structure. Selective coding related and refined categories. The categories began to take the form of a case study that then became stories representing Rosa's life.

Working from a theoretical perspective grounded in feminist beliefs, I included a deductive component in the research and analysis. Messner's (2000) multi-level analytical framework was employed to explore the data along with work from three key researchers (Connell, 1987; Walters, 1999; West & Zimmerman, 1987). This framework allowed me to capture how schools police gender as it works to silence teachers. The interactional level of analysis (West & Zimmerman, 1987) looked "at gender as an ongoing activity embedded in everyday interaction" (p. 130). How these teachers performed gender (Walters, 1999) within the context of race, class, and ethnicity were an explicit part of the analytic structure. Schools were a natural environment to examine issues of silencing and policing by patriarchal structures. Talking and observing teachers to see if they sustained, reproduced, and/or resisted the patriarchal structure was

one of my foci. Resisting to "do gender" appropriately within the institution held these teachers accountable for their actions by site evaluators (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p.146).

In my study, taking a structural inventory (Connell, 1987) accounted for a complete exploration of school personnel, their levels and dimensions (p. 98). I interviewed administrators at Madison to understand the structure behind these teachers and to realize the pressure that administrators face.

Analyzing and linking each lens through coding and data displays was helpful in looking at the data, but did not limit the emic categories that emerged. Rather, Messner's analysis was used in partnership with inductive codes that arose in the data. As I analyzed data, I continued to ask what literacy instruction looked like in these classrooms, and the roles school structure, gender, and culture played in the process.

Stance of the Researcher

I am a white upper class woman who is completing her doctorate in literacy at a university. My current beliefs originate from eight years working for white male administrators and teaching a curriculum designed for the dominant culture.

Construction of the subject is a central ethical issue. Therefore, I continuously ask myself questions regarding this position. What was my relation to the subject? What was the power symmetry? How did I use the

power? How did it impact knowledge? I realized that this position influences the research that I conducted by placing me in a dominant role. Therefore, I focused on the reciprocity that occurred between myself and the teachers. I looked forward to gaining knowledge about elementary reading instruction. At the same time, the teachers were minimally financially compensated for the time they have given to the study.

Trustworthiness of the Data

The feminist researcher takes an active role in qualitative research. There are five ways in which my role as the researcher is reported in the findings. First, I state my position as a researcher in the classroom including my own background and the biases that I bring to the study. Second, readers are provided with descriptions of the classroom literacy experiences to support the findings. This allows readers to connect and compare with their own literacy experiences. Third, disruptions in the data, places of discord, and multiple discourses are reflected using teacher interviews on perspectives about culture and gender. Fourth, the analysis is explicit with step-by-step description of the coding processes included in the dissertation. Trustworthiness of the data is assessed by triangulating information from the data collection methods (Participant observations, interviews, and document analysis) and from the perspective of different participants (myself, colleague observer, teachers, and

administrators) as we analyzed the data. Finally, I participated in conversations that provided culture checks by experienced Latina teachers.

Rosa

I paint this portrait with an introduction and brief biography of Rosa as a teacher, her life and history in the classroom. I examine her experiences learning to read and current instructional practices including the intertwining of culture, gender, and school structure into her reading instruction. In constructing the portrait, I study the instruction utilizing classroom observations, interviews, and analysis of school documents. Within a feminist framework, I examine Rosa "doing gender" through classroom and school interactions. Her story is unique as it reveals the intricacies that culture, gender, and the school structure weave into reading instruction.

Determined to Rebel

> I always wanted to be in the "Dreams and Dragons" group. I wanted to be in that group but I wasn't because I couldn't read. I was trying so hard to get into "Dreams and Dragons" which I eventually did get into. (10/12/98)

This competition resulted in Rosa improving her reading and gaining access to the top group. Entering "Dreams and Dragons" represented a world outside her life "that was perfect and was the best."

Structured classrooms prevailed in most of Rosa's elementary experiences and included direct instruction and teachers calling on students to read. Reading represented individual skills and workbooks. Rosa recalled reading stories about animals that lacked "meaningful language and challenging words" (2/5/99). These experiences left Rosa without any fond memories about reading in elementary school.

Rosa grew up in a family with a domineering father who made all the decisions including keeping Rosa at home after high school. College for Rosa was forbidden since her father had traditional ideas about his daughters pursuing an education. He wanted his daughters staying home and helping around the house and marrying early. But Rosa took a stand, and with the aid of a home school coordinator, resisted her father and applied to the local university. The arguments that ensued were a critical step in Rosa's life as she claimed independence and a sense of the adult she was becoming.

> My dad he was really against me going. He just wanted me to stay home and help out at home. He told me that it was a waste of my time because I was going to end up getting married probably spend a lot of money and not do anything in college. (2/5/99)

Rosa also struggled with her identity. She wanted the lifestyle of her friends.

> All of my American friends for some reason had the good families. Families that were always with each other, always doing things on the weekends. We never did anything. If anything all we did was get together and play music and I would hate our music. (8/2/00)

Rosa could not find strength within and searched outward for pride, identity, and friendship. She saw her friends growing up in "ideal American families" that were very different from her own experiences.

In college, Rosa rediscovered her culture through her coursework: "Just being exposed to my own culture I'm so proud of being a Latina and just happy and finally finding myself. And to me being a Latina is one of the most precious things that could possibly be" (8/2/00). Rosa found a part of herself through her culture which was tied to shifting perceptions as she progressed through her college experience.

Making Peace

The circle Rosa has traveled is now complete and her rebellion has been put to rest. Rosa is in her sixth year of teaching and is considered a leader at Madison Elementary School by her peers and administrators. Rosa participates

on many school committees including overseeing the drill team, and she hopes to pursue her doctorate in education.

While Rosa stays involved on campus her immediate concerns are with her family. Her father, who was the source of much anger and frustration when Rosa was a child, is terminally ill in a nursing home in Los Angeles. Everyday, Rosa drives thirty miles east to her home to pick up her mother and sister, only to make the return drive downtown to spend time with their father. Rosa's mother and sister do not drive so Rosa provides the transportation. As a result, Rosa's mother has become very dependent on Rosa to carry the financial and emotional responsibilities. During my observations, Rosa's dad was not expected to live, and Rosa, being the oldest in her family, is expected to make the funeral arrangements. According to Rosa, her mother and siblings are incapable of making decisions, so Rosa accepts this role knowing that her family cannot carry the responsibility. As the oldest sibling, Rosa carries the responsibility for the welfare of the family, emotionally and financially. She lives at home with her mother and two sisters, helping with the mortgage and disciplining the younger sisters.

When I met Rosa three years ago, she had postponed marriage and children in order to spend her time finishing her degrees; She was looking forward to entering a Ph.D program and hoped to earn an administrator position. Currently, Rosa is dating a man who is supportive of both Rosa and her family, and he is now considered the "man of the house." Rosa has now decided that

she is ready for marriage and children in her personal life. She has discussed marriage and wants to propose to him. Making peace in Rosa's life is complex. While she makes peace with the father that caused her so much grief growing up and has stepped into his role as head of the family, she allows her boyfriend to have a large role in the family and is considering proposing to him. Rosa acknowledges the struggle she had obtaining an education and becoming a teacher, which she did by herself. She also acknowledges the enjoyment she has in a relationship and her willingness to allow a man to make decisions for her.

Rosa is proud of her heritage. She longs for family gatherings, but that time has passed and her family can longer gather to enjoy these traditions. Rosa knows that she had quality family experiences growing up and cherishes the memories. Once again, culture is a shifting perception for Rosa.

Her Own Classroom

After struggling for many years in her own educational experiences, Rosa has allowed these experiences into her classroom. At nine o'clock, Rosa stops the class and students line up at the door to switch classrooms for reading. Some students remain in their seats as they have tested into Rosa's reading group and will remain in Rosa's room for instruction. Rosa waits in the hall to lead her students into the classroom and shares her rationale for homogenous reading groups as the students organize their materials.

Half of our classes can't read. That is when we ended

> up splitting our classes into high, medium, low
> and the nonreaders and we ended up meeting the needs
> of those groups. (2/5/99)

This conversation triggers my thoughts about her "Dreams and Dragons" experience as a child in second grade.

> Nancy: Remember when you were back in second grade with "Dreams and Dragons?" Do you think anyone in the low group wants to be in the high group?
> Rosa: At first, they didn't have no concept of low, high and medium. It was just a time to go and read. They eventually figured it out. We were constantly moving students too. Once they had mastered enough to go on, obviously we pushed them up. That was our whole point of mixing the teachers up to. We weren't always going to be down there. We would eventually be up. (2/5/99)

I listen as Rosa shares her concerns about children learning to read and write. With nonreaders, she teaches "the basics with the alphabet because they couldn't read the alphabet" (2/5/99) believing that children need a strong phonics program in order to learn how to read and write.

Rosa continues the tradition of selecting students to read, "I do the popcorn reading and I'm the one who chooses who reads" (8/2/00). Popcorn reading is an activity in which a student reads and then chooses another student

to continue, and the reading jumps from person to person. Rosa uses this activity to determine who is paying attention in her classroom.

Sitting in her classroom I watch the traditional comprehension quiz. Rosa begins the class by passing out blue construction books filled with notebook paper that resemble the college "blue book." Rosa then asks the students to answer each of the questions in their blue books. These questions are factual in nature probing students memory of details in the text.

Writing in Rosa's class is structured with assigned topics. I watch during Social Studies as Rosa instructs the students to write a paper on natural resources: "We are writing about natural resources. Paragraph one is natural resources and paragraph two is how and why" (4/12/00). Rosa wants to guide her students in structure and assigns topics that focus her writing program. On the walls, student samples of writing consist of summaries or paragraph writing with an assigned topic.

I notice books that students created after reading their stories. These are oversized books with construction covers filled with student writing and illustrations. Looking through the pages I notice that student writing is individualized but in response to a topic assigned by Rosa. Their illustrations are in the form of reproducible pictures colored by students.

Rosa enjoys having her students work on yearly research projects, especially the railroad system. The students study the railroad system with four groups representing the four railroads. Each group researches their railroad

system, gives an oral presentation, and completes a writing assignment on their learning from the experience. Students design trains made from construction paper that are placed on walls displaying their student research information.

Tapping into her own experiences as a student, Rosa communicates with parents on a regular basis. I listen as Rosa shares a problem with one student. She discusses how she phoned the parent, spending one hour talking about the student, classroom behavior and life at home. Miguel Romero, the assistant principal, is very supportive of Rosa and the problems she has with students as she talks with parents and their issues. Rosa understands the home environment of these students having as she a similar upbringing herself. These connections are very important for Rosa, and she realizes the importance of building relationships with her students' parents in order to understand their learning styles and environment.

> When I take the students for trips on Saturdays I meet the parents. A lot of the parents come to the after school program. A lot of my students stay at the after school program. I see the parents when they picked them up. Through the after school program I get to meet a lot more parents. More to a personal side to them. (2/5/99)

Many of Rosa's students have working parents and benefit from after school programs. Rosa uses these informal meetings to build a rapport with parents in

case behavior or learning problems arise that need to be addressed. She shares her relationships with parents as she describes connections to her own mother and father:

> A lot of these parents are like my parents. They were always both working. That is why a lot of students stayed after school because there was no one to pick them up. That is good that they have these programs because when I was in elementary I was a latch key child. I had to go home and lock the door because I was by myself until my father who came home first. These parents work. They don't have a babysitter. They may have money problems and I kind of know where they are coming from because that is how we were. (2/5/99)

Rosa believes the lifestyle and needs of her students and parents make her job in the classroom easier for both herself and her students, and she is thankful that she teaches students from a Latino population because she feels comfortable and the students understand her.

Rosa believes that she understands the importance of students making connections to the literature in the classroom. Besides direct connections with the curriculum, her classroom library has 84 English books and 29 Spanish books, another message of the importance of dual language ability.

Rosa's school year begins with an "immigrant" unit of people moving into this country that provides an opportunity for students to identify with their

own family experiences. I listen as Rosa conducts a discussion with her fifth graders on immigration into the United States, focusing on the benefits of immigration. Rosa then asks her students to interview family members on their immigrational experiences. A few days later, I ask Rosa about the assignment Rosa shares that many of the students did not remember immigrating having been too young or born in this country. This limited their personal connections to the assignment.

At various times, Rosa speaks Spanish to make connections for students. When teaching third grade she provides her students with worksheets in their native language because students are in Model B (program provided by the district) and need first language support. Print in Spanish is important to Rosa because her students are able to access the curriculum. During the second semester, Rosa focuses on English with worksheets, language, and textbooks. I listen as students work in groups conversing in Spanish with Rosa using Spanish for directions.

Although Rosa shares novels with her students, they are stories centered around white characters written by white males. Furthermore, the school servicing a predominant Latina/o population celebrates the birthday of a white male author. Similar to Eva's novel choices, Rosa shares her plans for introducing novels into the classroom this year: "I'm planning Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn. The Indian and the Cupboard will be next month. I'm also doing Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" (7/12/00).

Despite connections to the Latino culture, the English-Only mood that prevails in this school has permeated into this classroom and its bulletin boards. Bulletin boards display "Passages to the West" cut by students with routes drawn in crayon. Easter Bunnies are identical and colored by students. A math board titled "Basic Geometry" display store bought pictures. Grammar is reflected on the board "Build Your Own Sentence" encouraging students to work with nouns, adjectives, pronouns and verbs. A newspaper board decorates the corner of the closet highlighting the Los Angeles Times. The map of the United States is the focal point for a social studies center. Science focuses on the solar system with pictures of the planets displayed on the wall. In health, the students study the five senses and pictures form a bulletin board. There are representatives of the Latina/o culture with student made booklets titled "The Town of Our Lady The Queen of The Angels of Porciucula" which are used to assess handwriting and centers with signs labeled in Spanish.

Gender issues become explicit when Rosa has to change the seating arrangements.

> On the first day they chose their seats. If they can be responsible and not gossip. I had a lot of trouble. Boys were talking and girls were chit-chatting. When I sat them boy/girl they tend not to talk much. They boys say they don't want to talk to girls unless they are close friends. The opposite effect is that it promotes bonding with boys and girls. (4/13/00)

While Rosa polices the seating arrangements in her classroom, she also utilizes them to promote peer relationships between boys and girls.

We're Not All Dressing Alike

> Committees reviewed the books, at each grade level
> and that's how we also got our core lit books which
> were good. And last year, the past year,
> there was a lot of emphasis on Spanish core lit books,
> novels in Spanish. Now everything's switched back and there's
> more emphasis on English because of the English material.
> (4/20/00)

Rosa visualized the structure of school as a shifting of power with standards driving the curriculum, and she reflected on the changes she has seen within the district and school site. Prior to last spring, Rosa viewed her profession as teacher friendly. Rosa explained that the teachers voted on their reading series and publishers would visit the school to "sell" the teachers on their texts. The core book selection was also completed at the school site.

Teachers had choice that empowered them as professionals in their field while meeting the needs of their students. Unfortunately, this changed with the onset of Open Court, a phonics based program. Rosa was asked by Nidia (principal) to interview for a literacy coach position with the newly adopted Open Court literature series. I observed in her classroom when this interview

process occurred and Rosa was excited. She looked forward to leaving the classroom yet staying on campus to work with teachers implementing the new program.

While Rosa was excited at the prospect of a new position, rumors started to circulate around campus. Resistance against this highly structured mandated program was building as teachers attended the training.

> I hear the complaints already. Those teachers are coming back from the training. 'I don't want to sit there with my nine-year-olds and read off the manual', especially if their program has been successful. (4/20/00)

Teachers including Rosa were beginning to realize that severe changes would occur with the implementation of this skill based program. Rosa explained the changes.

> It's very, very direct instruction all the time. You can't skip a lesson. You can't deviate at all. And it's hard because I, myself, am not used to all that because sometimes I'm like, 'Oh you know what? I'm going to change this. This is a good time to do this. Forget what I was going to do but just wanted you to know.' Now it's going to be, 'No you can't do that. You have to stick to the book.' (4/20/00)

Rosa realized that the freedom she had as a teacher disappeared with the district's decision to adopt this program, and she was frustrated because she understood how rigid the program was and the extent to which teachers lacked choice. Rosa was unaware of the scripted nature of the program until she attended the training, and her anxiety peaked as she realized the implications. She shared, "No, it shouldn't be everybody doing the same. We're not all dressing alike; we're not all doing everything the same" (4/20/00). Rosa realized that teachers were losing power in the classroom.

In addition to the changes in curriculum, school administration contributed to Rosa's anxiety. Immediately after the Open Court training, Rosa found herself in the midst of a crisis at school. According to Rosa, her principal, Nidia Munoz, failed to write the job description correctly for the literacy coach position designating the position for someone with a CLAD credential instead of a BCLAD credential. As a result, Rosa was over-qualified for the position. At the same time, Rosa had given up her teaching position for the fall assuming that she would be leaving the classroom, and she ended up without a position on campus. Arguments between the Nidia Munoz, Miguel Romero, Rosa, and the union representatives ensued until the administrators agreed that Rosa could bump a teacher with less seniority out of a their teaching position. As a result, Rosa took a fifth grade position in July.

School interruptions were another source of pressure for Rosa last spring. During the twelve days that I was scheduled to observe, Rosa missed

seven days. These absences were a result of Open Court training, assemblies, field trips, and illness. One of the reasons Rosa was leaving the classroom was due to the increased interruptions by the office. She knew these absences were interrupting the teaching and learning in her classroom.

Closing Thoughts

Rosa carries many activities from her childhood classroom experiences into her own classroom. She favors a direct instruction approach where students read stories, answer comprehension questions, and take quizzes, yet she incorporates shared reading and research projects that were absent from her own experience.

As a child, Rosa saw many negative characteristics such as poverty and crime that she attributed to her Latina/o culture. As she became an adult, Rosa knew that there were many positive qualities within her culture that she never saw as a child, and she found pride in her culture. In the classroom, although Rosa integrates many aspects of her culture, she believes that the students need to learn English and American history in order to succeed, and she creates an environment that supports this position.

Rosa views the structure of school as school in the past and school in the present. She articulates the choices teachers once had only to lose them with the Open Court mandate. Teachers had dramatically more choice with previous packaged curriculums. Rosa feels the pressure from the district in standardized

testing and ensuring that all students can read and write. Rosa copes with this pressure with her colleagues which allows Rosa to deal with her daily pressure both in and out of the classroom.

Discussion

I now turn to a discussion of the findings that emerged from Rosa's story. In this section, I address the findings by the research questions.

Reading

This section focuses on the relationship between Rosa's childhood reading experiences and her current reading instruction. As a child, Rosa learned how to be successful in doing school. Now, Rosa has sifted instructional techniques from childhood that she believed to be effective into her own classroom. For example, she integrated phonics, reading groups, and spelling into her current instruction. Rosa utilized the format of reading a story, answering comprehension questions, completing skill worksheets, and culminating with a comprehension quiz. She continued reading groups in her classrooms by assessing students and grouping by classroom during language arts instruction. She found a way to address the needs of her students via a program she knew so well as children. There are two findings that emerge from this research question. Rosa shows a strong relationship between how she learned to read and how she is teaching reading. Because Rosa was not

mandated by a scripted curriculum, she had minimal freedom to sift through her experiences and create an instructional program that met the needs of the state standards and herself as a teacher.

Culture and Gender

As I progressed through this study, I noticed how Rosa discussed culture as a dichotomy, with the dominant culture opposing Latino culture. While I was learning to view culture as a fluid entity, this discussion portrays culture according to her definition. Rosa shared how she grew up in a home that reflected a dual lifestyle, the dominant culture and Latino culture. In school, Rosa assimilated into the dominant culture by learning how to be successful with her studies. During this time, she resisted her Latino roots wanting the lifestyle of her Anglo friends. Upon reaching high school, she realized the importance of recognizing her culture, and as an adult, embrace her heritage. Now, Rosa wants the closeness of her family that existed when she was a child. She yearns for the home cooking by her mother and the family gatherings that can no longer occur.

While she lived a dual life at home, school painted a different picture. At the beginning of this study, Rosa taught third grade and she provided first language support for her students in the Midol B program. Now, Rosa teaches fifth grade without the Model B structure. Rosa's teaches in a classroom that focuses on the dominant culture. Rosa's room contained bulletin boards

displaying publisher materials and textbooks reflecting dominant culture themes with the predominant language as English. Textbooks and bulletin boards highlighted the dominant culture. This classroom supported the district's position on bilingual education and phonics instruction.

Gender Performance

Messner's analytical framework of gender performance (Walters, 1999), cultural symbols (Walters, 1999), and structural inventory (Connell, 1987) intersect teachers' lives in this study. Taking the position of gendering people is complex. Structure also known as the division of labor and power (Connell, 1987, p.91) plays a role in the ways Rosa performs gender at home, in her classroom and in her school. How does Rosa react and in what ways is an analytical question to explore.

Rosa appears to be a passive woman who allows her administrators, district, and state to dictate her actions. Beneath this surface, Rosa resists the same forces that restrains her. One way to analyze this is to read acts of resistance and compliance at two levels, the personal and professional. Rosa resisted her father by attending college and pursuing her career. She realizes that she wants to marry her boyfriend, but is taking care of her family while her father is seriously ill. In her classroom, she is the creator of her instructional program, but is more complacent to the school structure than other teachers. Analyzing how the structure of school impacts Rosa and how she perform

gender is important for understanding how people react within rigid structures and whether they succumb or resist to these pressures. It is also insightful for educational purposes. As a result of this study, I found that the dominant culture curriculum imposed by the school structure is one force that causes Rosa to perform gender and culture in different ways at home and school.

Another component of Messner's (1999) analytical framework is the structural inventory (Connell, 1987) of the school system. As I mentioned earlier, the school structure imposes the dominant culture in the form of curriculum mandates. Rosa was under tremendous pressure from the state, district, and school site to teach to the state standards and raise test scores. Rosa shared the pressure she received from their administrators to follow state reading standards. Close monitoring of lessons designed to fit the standards pressures Rosa to compact large amounts of knowledge into limited time. Fear of standardized testing has spread through the schools and consumes valuable instructional time. Besides the impact of testing, standards, and bilingual education policies, interruptions create stress in the Rosa's daily routine. Interruptions due to staff development training, intersession training, waiver training, and other meetings causes Rosa to miss numerous days of teaching in her classroom. The administration at this school site serve as the pipeline for the mandates from district and state officials. Their jobs are on the line if test scores do not improve, and they transfer this pressure onto the teachers. All the administrators state that they are at the school to follow orders and implement

the structure. This teacher's story indicates that the school structure sends powerful messages to teachers that they are not respected as professionals, they are not competent and have little control in their lives as teachers.

Implications

In this study, we see Rosa implementing childhood reading techniques in her classrooms while having choice and the freedom to sift through her experiences and create her own instructional agenda. Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, and Lloyd's (1991) study state that beliefs of teachers relate to their classroom practices in the teaching of reading comprehension. In my study, I added observations and document analysis to obtain a larger picture of understanding reading beliefs. While my study differs from this work, it validates the findings but raises questions about what instruction would look like without district mandates. This suggests that larger structural influences can impact teacher beliefs.

Schooling has influenced the curricular decisions teachers have made in their classrooms. Rosa's personal experiences with phonics, spelling, and reading groups has sifted into her teaching. My findings are similar with the work of Richardson (1996), who states that experiences with schooling and instructions are based upon their own experiences as students. Rosa, who had a miserable reading group experience in second grade, now uses reading groups in her classroom. This contradicts Holt-Reynolds (1992) work that states teachers

use their own experiences as students in classrooms to develop beliefs about how other students would react to teaching behaviors. Her story contradicts this premise as she reinstates the same activity that caused her anxiety as a child.

Zancanella (1991) found that personal approaches can conflict with conventional school approaches. Rosa had concerns about the individual needs of her students but was torn between meeting these needs and accounting for the standards and state testing requirements. My work supports this premise. Rosa experienced conflict between the school structure and her educational beliefs that caused her to resist or comply with the structure.

Similar to Nespor's (1987) findings that beliefs are formed early, Rosa acknowledged the sifting of her childhood experiences in her own classrooms and was comfortable with her pedagogical viewpoints. This is relevant to the work of Rust (1994), who states that beginning teachers develop a set of beliefs about teaching in their teacher education programs that is not related to the set of beliefs about teaching they developed during their elementary and secondary education. While Rosa was educated in constructivist beliefs during teacher education, she reverted back to traditional models of instruction from her childhood or district mandates. This study raises questions about the importance of situating teachers and their classrooms within the context of the school structure. Examining how the structure of the school, district, and state level supports or dominates is important in understanding Rosa and her role as a teacher.

My research indicates that the dominant culture causes teachers to perform gender and culture in different ways at home and in school. Teachers resist or comply in a dominant culture curriculum imposed by the school structure. While Rosa speaks Spanish and has shared many cultural experiences with her students, there are, similar to the work of Carger (1996), differences between the home and school culture. Messages about the school culture are found in this classroom which support Gay's (1993b) work that teachers of color may not culturally affiliate with their students. Textbooks, print on walls, library books, and class themes all promote a mismatch between home and school culture. Furthermore, as Valdes's (1996) ethnography argues, that lack of familiarity with U.S. schools causes confusion about programs, requirements, and grading. Rosa utilizes her Spanish and cultural knowledge (Moll, 1980; Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992; Moll & Greenberg, 1990) to bridge these gaps with parents while trying to minimalize their confusion. At times, Rosa resisted the dominant culture mandates in order to provide students access to an education. But then, she insists that access to education provided by the school is necessary for her students to succeed.

Gender Performance

In order to understand and change the lives of teachers, gender has to be central to the analysis. Walters (1999) calls for research that "speaks of power and agency, domination and resistance, subjection and subversion" (p. 249).

In my work, Rosa walks through a life that is intertwined with performing gender, cultural symbols, and division of labor. She discussed the pressures she felt from the school system, and her reactions were complex. While she felt dominated by the system, she also began to resist, closing her doors and changing her program. Rosa did not volunteer to lose power in her classroom, but was trapped in a structure that wanted to control her. As Rosa maneuvered in different ways through this school structure, she drew on past education, families, culture and paradoxical ways of culture and resistance. As Walters (1999) explains, "Theories of gender as play and performance need to be intimately and systematically connected with the power of gender to constrain, control, violate, and configure" (p. 250). What is important is to understand that these teachers arrive at school with cultural and gender blueprints that intertwine with the hierarchy of school. This intertwining causes them to perform gender in different ways across different environments. This study responds to the imposition of policy, culture, race, and language which are more salient than gender. While there are real moments of saliency with gender, gender is in the background of this study.

When analyzing schools, it is important to understand the power structure. Connell (1987) calls for an inventory of the gender regime of any source of power or agency. In this study, the school is the immediate source of power and women hold leadership roles as principal and curriculum support roles while controlling the campus and teachers. According to Connell,

> there are two structures of relationships between women and men. One has to do with the division of labour: the organization of housework and childcare....The second has to do with authority, control and coercion: the hierarchies of the state and business, institutional and interpersonal violence, sexual regulation and surveillance, domestic authority and its contestation" (p. 97).

Connell emphasizes that these are not separate structures but are interwoven just as in the case of the administration and teachers in these schools. On this campus, women have leadership roles, but they are also the ones who send powerful messages to teachers. At the same time, they take on masculine characteristics as they carry out their roles by perpetuating the policies of the state. Reproducing the dominant culture message of Open Court, CELL, and Proposition 227 causes teachers to realize they are not respected as professionals, they are not competent, and they are given little control in their lives as teachers.

Limitations of the Study

As in any study, this research is subjective in nature. Although I observed and interviewed these teachers on a daily basis, I also learned about their daily lives as women outside of school. I acquired knowledge about their relationships and their families. While I viewed this research grounded in

feminist theory, another researcher knowledgeable in another theory would interpret these teachers in a different way.

Implications for Future Research

This qualitative study focused on teachers' reading experiences, culture and gender intertwining with literacy, and the impact of school structure. Implications of this research reveal the impact of educational policies in California schools and how gender, culture, and reading beliefs mediate the implementation process. These policies are causing teachers to reflect on their choice of careers in education. As a result of the data generated in my study, I suggest areas for future research. The following sections are grouped around the research questions. Within each section, I provide suggestions for practical and research implications.

Rosa draws on her childhood reading experiences to structure her own classroom instruction. Since this study indicates that teachers teach the way they were taught, and state mandates are directed curriculum, what is the future for teacher education? The findings in this study not only impact the teachers of today, but the teachers of tomorrow as well. The findings lead to me to think about the image of the teachers in this country. How much of what we do in the classroom relates to childhood experiences, and how much relates to images we have about how to "do teaching?" This research raises issues about the role teacher professors should have in their field. Completing discourse analysis

research in classrooms may give us insight into the experiences of teachers and students. Findings from this study show how childhood experiences translate into current instruction and how current curriculum programs replicate these childhood experiences. Research that continues the exploration of teachers' educational experiences can further enlighten the field.

The qualitative nature of this study captures the essence of culture and gender in classrooms. Research that continues the inquiry into the silencing of culture in the classroom needs to be conducted to understand the growing distance between policy, teachers, and students.

In order to understand teachers, their beliefs, and their decision-making processes, research must inquire into the structure of schools that support the educational system. Furthermore, research needs to investigate the pipeline of programs originating at the state level and their role in the classroom. Any research that is conducted in these areas must include an understanding of the power that influences these decisions. I suggest more publication of the historical nature behind current educational trends. I call for all educational research to be situated within the historical contexts of schools and I suggest continued research on the impact of history in education.

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